

MAR 13 2015

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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH WORKING  
GROUP TO ASSESS THE SCOPE AND RISKS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON  
THE HEALTH OF HAWAII'S RESIDENTS AND TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC  
PLAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS TO HEALTH STATEWIDE.

1 WHEREAS, climate change, together with other natural and  
2 human-made health stressors, influences human health and disease  
3 in many ways; and  
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5 WHEREAS, as a result of climate change, some existing  
6 health threats will intensify, and in other cases, new health  
7 threats will emerge; and  
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9 WHEREAS, public health may be affected by disruptions of  
10 physical, biological, and ecological systems, including  
11 disturbances originating in Hawaii or elsewhere; and  
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13 WHEREAS, the potential health effects of these disruptions  
14 include: increased asthma and other respiratory and  
15 cardiovascular diseases, heat-related morbidity and mortality,  
16 injuries and premature deaths related to extreme weather events,  
17 changes in the prevalence and geographical distribution of food-  
18 and water-borne illnesses and other infectious diseases, and  
19 greater levels of mental and emotional stress in response to  
20 climate change and extreme weather-related emergencies; and  
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22 WHEREAS, Hawaii is not alone in its concern about the issue  
23 of climate change and health; and  
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25 WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association and other  
26 national health organizations, such as the Centers for Disease  
27 Control and Prevention, have identified climate change and  
28 health as a major public health issue; and



1 WHEREAS, the magnitude and frequency of climate change-  
2 related events are projected to increase and will stress the  
3 capability of existing response systems to manage them; and  
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5 WHEREAS, when these crucial response systems, such as  
6 communications for emergency medical services or transportation  
7 for evacuation, become stressed, public health will be affected;  
8 and  
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10 WHEREAS, there are ways that the entire array of public  
11 health strategies, from health policy advocacy, health  
12 surveillance and monitoring, environmental health intervention,  
13 infectious disease intervention, health education, and other  
14 public health services, all can help to mitigate and reduce the  
15 health effects of climate change; and  
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17 WHEREAS, public health workers in the State surveyed by the  
18 Hawaii Public Health Association in 2014 expressed a desire to  
19 help address the effects of climate change on health; and  
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21 WHEREAS, however, most public health workers feel that they  
22 lack the specific expertise, knowledge, or skills to do so; and  
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24 WHEREAS, a coordinated public health response is needed to  
25 discuss emerging and perceived threats while also providing  
26 public health workers with the necessary education, skills, and  
27 resources; and  
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29 WHEREAS, recognizing that climate change is one of the most  
30 significant public health issues of our time and that there are  
31 many other ways in which climate change is already affecting  
32 public health, the goal of the State should be to increase  
33 effective public health engagement and action regarding climate  
34 change; now, therefore,  
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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
37 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the  
38 House of Representatives concurring, that the Director of Health  
39 is requested to convene the Climate Change and Health Working  
40 Group to assess the scope and risks of climate change on the  
41 health of Hawaii's residents in order to develop a strategic  
42 plan to address climate change risks to health statewide; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
2 Working Group shall be composed of public- and private-sector  
3 organizations and entities that will focus on assisting health  
4 professionals in preparing for and responding effectively and  
5 efficiently to the health effects of climate change through the  
6 following:

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- 8 (1) Developing, improving, integrating, and maintaining  
9 state and regional disease surveillance systems and  
10 monitoring capacity to respond to health-related  
11 effects of climate change, including specific threats  
12 related to:
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- 14 (A) Water security, food safety, and vector-borne  
15 infectious diseases;
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- 17 (B) Respiratory and pulmonary effects, including  
18 responses to air allergens;
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- 20 (C) Cardiovascular effects, including impacts of  
21 temperature extremes;
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- 23 (D) The health effects of air pollution, including  
24 heightened sensitivity to air pollution; and
- 25
- 26 (E) Mental and behavioral health impacts of climate  
27 change in the health of displaced persons and at-  
28 risk populations and communities;
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- 30 (2) Creating evidence-based tools for predicting and  
31 monitoring the public health impacts of climate change  
32 at the state and community levels;
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- 34 (3) Identifying and prioritizing communities and  
35 populations vulnerable to the health effects of  
36 climate change, and determining actions and  
37 communication strategies that should be adopted to  
38 inform and protect these communities and populations;
- 39
- 40 (4) Developing recommendations for health communication,  
41 public education, and outreach programs aimed at  
42 public health and health care professionals as well as



1 the general public to promote preparedness and  
2 response strategies related to climate change and  
3 public health;  
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- 5 (5) Developing recommendations for expanding and training  
6 the public health workforce to strengthen its capacity  
7 to respond to and prepare for the health impacts of  
8 climate change; and  
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- 10 (6) Developing recommendations for the development,  
11 implementation, and support of preparedness and  
12 response planning to anticipate and reduce the health  
13 threats due to climate change; and  
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health, or the  
16 Director's designee, serve as the chairperson or co-chairperson  
17 of the Climate Change and Health Working Group; and  
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
20 Working Group include representation from both public- and  
21 private-sector representatives in public health and health care;  
22 and  
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
25 Working Group shall submit a report, to be prepared and drafted  
26 by the Department of Health, of its findings and  
27 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
28 Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the  
29 Regular Session of 2016; and  
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
32 Working Group will be dissolved on June 30, 2016; and  
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
35 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health,  
36 President of the Hawaii Public Health Association, and other  
37 identified agencies in health care and public health.  
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